



Testimony on House Bill 2516
presented to
House Energy and Environment Committee
by
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Chairman Hedke and committee members, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is pleased to provide testimony in support of HB 2516 which proposes changes to the Asbestos Control Act. Specifically, this bill proposes to eliminate the requirements for Kansas specific training and certification of individuals conducting asbestos abatement work and eliminates the requirements for individual annual certification renewals. These requirements duplicate or exceed existing federal requirements.

In 1985, in response to concerns about asbestos abatement in Kansas schools, the Kansas Legislature passed the Kansas asbestos statutes. The cost of insurance for schools had risen sharply during the 1980s so schools were scrambling to have their asbestos removed in order to reduce insurance costs. With no regulation in place, some asbestos abatement companies were doing sloppy work which resulted in more problems for the schools. This brought about concerns for the health of students and faculty in these school buildings.

The Kansas statutes required Kansas approved training as well as certification of workers until federal laws were established in 1990. At that point Kansas and most other states stopped using state established training requirements and instead relied on the federal law. Kansas did not halt the requirements for certification which was used to verify adequate training. Now we are requesting through HB 2516 to have those provisions removed from state law due to redundancy with federal regulations which itself requires adequate training. To be clear, this bill does not remove the need for worker training, only for a specific KDHE approved training course.

The result of these changes would reduce fee payment revenue for Kansas specific asbestos training and certification by approximately \$28,000 per year. The bill also would direct remaining asbestos program fees revenue, currently deposited to the State General Fund, to the previously established Air Fee Fund.

Thank you for allowing me to explain the benefits of this bill. I will be happy to stand for any questions.